

NAVAJO NATION

Division of Health

2011 NEWSLETTER

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Office of the Vice-President Retreat and Navajo Division of Health Strategic Planning Session

The Navajo Division of Health administration and staff were joined by the Navajo Nation **Vice-President Rex Lee Jim** on March 21st and 23rd for the annual retreat and strategic planning session in Flagstaff, Arizona. The first order of the day for the Navajo Nation Vice-President was the ground breaking ceremony at the Twin Arrows Casino and Resort just East of Flagstaff, AZ. He and his staff then participated the afternoon meeting in Flagstaff, AZ.

Topics of discussion covered the oversight by Vice-President Jim of the

Navajo Division of Health (NDOH), Division of Dine Education (DODE) and proposed plan for Division of Social Services (DSS).

The NDOH priority is to host an orientation

for the Human Development Committee, Nabik'lyati' Committee and Navajo Nation Council with an overview on the proposed Navajo Division of Public Health.

Dr. Madan Poudel orientated the Vice-President on the Monitoring, Enforcement, Regulatory, Evaluation and Coordination initiative also known as MEREC. The goal of NDOH is for the Navajo Nation Council pass an enabling the legislation to elevate NDOH to the Navajo Department of Public Health (NDoPH) therefore, authorize NDoPH to administer MEREC to monitor all private, non-profit, including PL 93-638 health providers on the Navajo Nation. In preparing enabling legislation, Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) of PL 93-638 facilities, Navajo Area Indian Health Service representatives, Sage Memorial Hospital participated in the draft and letters of support were received from the states of Arizona, Utah and New Mexico.

The outcome of the strategic planning session and retreat was development of four Taskforces including: 1) Personnel issues and review 2) Organizational functions 3) Legislative reviews and 4) DOJ role. Also the development of 100 day (March 28th to

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NDOH's Hard Working, Appreciated Administrator



Dr. Madan Poudel has been working with the Navajo Nation for approximately 20 years. Presently he serves as a Health Services Administrator, planner, researcher and evaluator with the Navajo Division of Health. Dr. Poudel has additional talents as a decision maker, project manager, problem solver, grant writer, grant reviewer and proposal writer. He is also an author and co-author of over 100 published and unpublished books, articles, manuals, grants, reports, profiles and other publications. A important project of Dr. Poudel is the proposed Navajo Department of Public Health (NDoPH). Some of the essential features and functions of the NDoPH will be the prevention of epidemics and spread of diseases; protection against environmental hazards; prevention of accident and trauma related injuries, deaths and

'Hard Working Administrator' Continued on page 2



Rex Lee Jim, Navajo Nation Vice-President

NDOH Expresses Appreciation

Navajo Division of Health Extends Appreciation to Robert Nakai. The NDOH personnel working at the Central Office in Window Rock, AZ saw the familiar smiling face of a former Executive Director, Mr. Robert Nakai. Navajo Nation President, Ben Shelly, appointed, Mr. Nakai as a member of his administration for a brief duration.

Mr. Nakai's Navajo Clans are Tsenabiltihni (Sleepy Rock Clan); born for Tabahii (Edgewater). He is highly qualified through past work experiences and degrees with a Bachelor of Science in Education from Brigham Young University and a Master of Public Health, Hospital and Health Care Management from the University of California. He has worked with health programs from San Francisco, California to Milwaukee Wisconsin and the Navajo Nation. He is known to enjoy Pow Wow and the music. His philosophy is: "Love your tradition and culture, it is who you are."

NDOH staff extends a heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Robert Nakai for his leadership and wishes him success in all his future endeavors.



Robert Nakai

Continued from page 1 'Hard Working Administrator'

disabilities; promotion and encouragement of healthy life styles; response to public health emergencies and disease outbreaks and to control, manage and maintain ownership of data and health information.

Over the years, Dr. Poudel has received many awards and recognitions. In August of 2010, Dr. Poudel received a prestigious award for his dedicated service and significant contribution to Indian Health. The recognition highlighted Dr. Poudel's direct services to tribes healthcare programs, activities and advancing the mission of direct services. The special recognition came from the Indian Health Service Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee, dated August 26, 2010, Billings, Montana.

Dr. Poudel lives with his family in Gallup, New Mexico. He speaks English, Nepali and Hindi languages fluently. Dr. Poudel was born and raised in a multi-cultural setting in Nepal. There seems to be no limit on the services Dr. Poudel provides to the Navajo Division of Health. His office is a daily stop for NDOH personnel to share ideas, consult on projects, and even to express concerns. With the amount of information forthcoming from Dr. Poudel's office, there is no such thing as a simple visit to say "Hello".

Roanhorse Leaves NDOH with Appreciation

Anslem Roanhorse served out his term as Executive Director of NDOH as the present administration began in January 2011. NDOH extends it appreciation for a job well done.

Mr. Roanhorse was appointed as the Executive Director of the Navajo Division of Health in June 2003. Since 2003 the Division has reached out and met with numerous state, federal, and tribal officials at local, state, regional and national levels primarily to improve and expand healthcare services for which the Navajo people are entitled to.

Originally from Cornfield, Arizona, Mr. Roanhorse earned his B.A. degree in Sociology from the University of Arizona and M.A. in Social Work from Arizona State University. In 1977, Mr. Roanhorse began his professional career on the Navajo Nation and has over 25 years of experience in social services, child

welfare, and health care including twelve years of service with Navajo Area Indian Health



Anslem Roanhorse

Service. He has previously served as the Executive Director of Navajo Division of Social Services and Chief of Staff at the Office of the President and Vice President. He also worked with Arizona Department of Economic Security in Phoenix, AZ as Deputy Assistant Director, and also worked as a Medical Social Worker at a private hospital in Gallup, New Mexico.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness

The Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) program, formerly the Bio-Terrorism Preparedness Program is responsible for initiating public health emergency plans for the entire Navajo Nation.

A goal of PHEP is to build viable partnerships with agencies from the states of Arizona, New Mexico, Counties, federal agencies, private and local business, including 110 Navajo Chapters. PHEP must participate in local, regional, and statewide public health emergency planning exercises to enhance capability of infrastructure and resources.

The Navajo Nation (NN) is the only tribe to have a strategic National Stockpile/Receiving, Storage, Staging site (SNS/RSS) and is the model for the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC). The Navajo Nation has proven capability to cover 27,000 square miles to adequately operate 16 Points of Dispensing Sites (PODS) and have a central temporary warehouse site to receive medical supplies ordered from the state strategic national stockpile.

The Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program has a viable Pandemic Influenza Plan approved by the Commission on Emergency Management on May 11, 2009. Each year the plan is updated for improvement, including any changes according to the structure of the Navajo Nation.

PHEP ensures that the Navajo Nation resources such as manpower, infrastructure, equipment and communication are in compliance with the National Incident Management System Incident Command System (NIMS-ICS). The Commission on

Emergency Management adopted the NIMS-ICS System on September 13, 2007 and fully supports its implementation on the Navajo Nation.

In December 2010, the PHEP Program relocated from the St. Michaels Professional Building to the Log Cabin Office building behind Navajoland Inn & Suites in St. Michaels, Arizona; 392 West Highway 264.

PHEP is currently in the planning stage to conduct a Northern Region H1N1 Table Top Exercise on June 21-22 in Flagstaff, Arizona. The exercise is primarily to share the best practices and lessons learned from the 2009 real-event of the H1N1 outbreak in the United States and world-wide.

The PHEP staff are: Program Manager, **David Nez**; also the Arizona Strategic National Stockpile Coordinator for the Navajo Nation; whom was recently elected as Vice-President of the Arizona Tribal Executive Committee (AZTEC) which includes Tribal Public Health representatives from all 21 tribes in Arizona. **Priscilla Thomas** is the Program/Project Specialist, **Charlene Jim** is the Administrative Assistant, and **Selena Manychildren Thomas** is the Sr. Public Information Officer. PHEP staff share in the implementation of many projects in public health emergencies to meet the deliverables to support the Navajo Nation, Navajo Area Indian Health Service, Counties, State and Federal agencies, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention/Division of Strategic National Stockpile.

Community Health Representative/Outreach Program Addressing Issues for Staff and Clients



Mae Gilene-Begay, Maxine Lynch, Carol Mark, Gloria Chee

Community Health Representative/Outreach Program is addressing several health issues and making sure the staff acquire their certification to continue their work in meeting the needs of the Navajo people, according to **Mae-Gilene Begay**, Program Director.

"The CHR/Outreach Program's main objective is Primary Prevention in Public Health, therefore, all three programs have been engaged with various forms of preventive health education such as Hantavirus, "Cover your Cough," Mammography, Hypertensive, Mass Vaccination, Nutrition, Health Screening and Health Fairs throughout the Navajo Nation, and the community responses were commendable," said Begay in her report to the Division of Health's Executive Director.

Begay also said that two Senior Community Health Workers from Gallup and Shiprock Service Units presented at the New Mexico Community Health Workers conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

"They presented on their participation with the COPE Project to the New Mexico

CHW Association and the Tucson Indian Health Service employees," Begay said. "The intent was to showcase a unique collaboration between the Navajo CHR and Brigham Women Health of Harvard University."

All CHRs, Social Hygiene Technicians and TB Technicians are required to maintain certain training certification to maintain qualification for their respective positions. Consequently, all CHRs worked diligently to attend training locally to update their certification as Food Handlers, First Responders, and in various disciplines such as NIMS-ICS, HIPAA, Foot Care, Insulin/Medication, Computer Awareness and CPR.

"It's critical for CHRs, Social Hygiene and TB Control Technicians to all maintain good standing with all of their required training and certifications. The program training matrixes are reviewed annually during the Navajo Nation audit," Begay said.

In other matters that CHR is working on,

Begay said "Collaboration will continue with the University of New Mexico regarding the Birth Cohort study. The program participated in two-day training on regarding the Birth Cohort study and the program's future involvement. The training was well received by program participants. A lot of pertinent information was relayed on Environmental issues affecting the Navajo Nation."

The STD Prevention Program continues to be very active with preventative health educational activities to keep the STI incidence rate down with its collaborators. Another activity such as monthly joint conference calls keeps all providers in the loop on status of STI to keep the incidence rate to a minimum.

The Navajo TB staff received pharmacology Training related to TB medication and certifications to administer TB skin test. In honor of the World TB day on March 24, 2011, various events have occurred such as 2011 Navajo Nation TB

Information Campaign, press conference with UNM students, two billboards with TB prevention information. There were also a media campaign that included the taping of a TB technician with a Public Health Nurse that was aired on Farmington televisions, Navajo Times ran an article on TB in March 10, 2011 edition, and a 30-minute video called "TB in Navajo Country" highlighting the history of TB disease, contact investigation and treatment.

The status of the on-going Projects are as follows:

The program will provide CHR PCC Refresher training for staff in April 2011. A total of two training will be held for personnel: CHR PCC Coding and CHR PCC data entry. This will aid in staff's comprehension of proper coding and ensuring the importance of completing CHR PCC daily.

The program will provide 80 hour First Responder Course for new CHR/Outreach Program personnel in April 2011.



Newsletter: Ramona Antone Nez - Coordinator,
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Ray Baldwin-Louis - Additional Articles and
Photography, and Dillon Day - Design & Layout

*We hope you enjoy our First Newsletter
for The Division of Health.
We would like to Thank our Contributors
for their Success Stories.*



Food Distribution Program Making Changes



LaVeena A. Smith, Nutrition Education Technician, Navajo Nation Food Distribution Program, explains different food products offered by Food Distribution Program

Good news from Food Distribution Program Manager, **Claudeen Tallwood**, who has been on the job for the past six months. The program instituted changes as major incentives to inspire the Navajo people to learn and practice good nutrition. The program assists the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in distributing commodity foods on the Navajo Nation. Other Native Tribes also get food through the USDA. There are three major changes: Canned foods are no longer generic or surplus. Instead you will find major commercial brands

such as Libby, Del Monte and Kellogg. All 7 warehouses distribute fresh vegetable and fresh fruits. The produce are from what is in season and include lettuce, cucumbers, squash, oranges, apples and melons when in season. Frozen meats are now available for distribution. Eligible clients can receive roast beef, ground beef, chicken, ham and even bison which are low in fat and very nutritious. The Food Distribution Program worked with the Navajo Special Diabetes Project to acquire new freezers and coolers at all seven warehouses on the Navajo Nation. The program

also has refrigerated trailers and trucks to deliver food to select distribution sites. American Reinvestment Recovery Act, an Obama Stimulus Fund, in the amount of \$147,000 purchased a new mobile service unit complete with lubricants, oil, tires, water, diesel, air pumps, even a wrench to service food distribution trucks anywhere on the Navajo Nation. The program also received three, new 10 ton tractor trailer units to transport food from Fort Wingate, the central receiving warehouse, to the seven warehouses. Nutrition Education Technicians demonstrate nutritional education sessions on how to use commodity foods and provide recipes at each food distribution site. Nutrition Education Technicians attend food fairs to get nutrition information to the public and respond to public events upon invitation. In March, two Nutrition Education Technicians attended the Western Regional Conference in Reno, Nevada and displayed program information and nutrition education. Plans are to participate in the Regional Conference for Native American and Alaskan Natives this June in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The Food Distribution Program networks with the Navajo Special Diabetes Project, Navajo Area Agency on Aging - Senior Citizen Centers and other programs on the Navajo Nation. Monthly food distribution schedules are posted at chapter houses and warehouses. The Navajo public has a choice to take either food stamps or food distribution services; both are funded by USDA and food distribution.

'Retreat' Continued from page 1

June 30) goals and action plans at Division level and Program level which will focus on partnerships and collaboration; Navajo Nation Medicaid Feasibility Study; Indian Health Care Improvement Act; Facilities; Economic Development; and Code amendments.

Navajo Nation Vice-President Jim is proactive to help the Nation as we move towards a healthy workforce and Nation. He encourages the Division personnel to work together by establishing and exercising a working relationship with long-term thinking and planning to provide quality essential services. Please be prepared to provide a status report to Vice President on any given day as he may visit or call upon our Division and Programs unannounced.

Important Step towards Addressing Youth Suicide

New Mexico Governor Martinez signed SB 417 on March 31st at the Paul Thomas Performing Arts Center in Shiprock, NM.

This is an important step towards addressing youth suicide in our Native American communities to deal with teen suicide. Governor

Martinez's Office spokesperson commented, "She wants every New Mexico young person to know that their life matters, and she wants our communities to know how to



assist students who are in distress or feeling hopeless."

New Mexico ranks fourth in the country for the number of suicides by 15-24 year olds. Twenty percent of Native American high school students considered suicide in 2009, a higher rate than all other ethnic groups, according to the New Mexico Youth Risk and Resiliency Study. A recent string of suicides on Navajo Nation communities highlight those facts. Officials in the area offered to increase counseling services and created a 24 hour hotline in response to the crisis.

SB 417 could create a clearing house of data about suicides, as well as culturally sensitive programs to prevent suicide. The bill was sponsored by Senator Lynda Lovejoy, D-Crownpoint, NM.

Public Health Reminders

Hantavirus cases become more common in the spring and summer. A person can contract Hantavirus by breathing particles of rodent droppings, urine or saliva. Symptoms include fever, muscle aches, chills, a headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain and cough.

Here are some important steps provided by the New Mexico Department of Health, to keep in mind when treating rodent droppings:

Avoid contact with rodents and mice.

Open windows and doors to air out enclosed spaces.

Check storage sheds and enclosed spaces for rodent droppings.

If rodent droppings are evident, trap mice until they are all gone.

Seal openings to keep mice and rodents out. To clean up rodent droppings you must wear a face mask and rubber gloves. Put Clorox or Lysol disinfectant in a spray bottle, mix half and half with water and spray on droppings, letting the area soak for 15 minutes. Clean up with paper towel or rags and drop them into a plastic bag. Wash all surfaces with Clorox or Lysol disinfectant following the clean-up.

Put hay, wood and compost piles far from your home.

Get rid of trash and junk piles.

Do not leave your pet food and water where mice can get to it.

Navajo Nation Veterinary and Livestock Program are available to teach care and prevention of diseases such as Rabies, West Nile Virus, Plague and other precautions such as annual vaccinations, spaying and neutering of cats and dogs to avoid over population of these animals.

Navajo Health Education has staff that is also available to teach prevention education and make presentations at the community level.

Preparedness:

Get your flu shot. It does help delay flu and its effects. Practicing healthy habits also helps fight against illnesses. These steps include washing hands, keeping hands away from eyes and nose, using hand sanitizers coughing or sneezing into Kleenex tissues or into the arm or clothing, avoiding crowded places and staying home from work or school when ill.

Be prepared at all times for natural events and dress accordingly if you are planning a trip or being outdoors for an extended period of time.

Restock with necessary supplies before bad weather occurs, including non-perishable foods such as rice and pastas, beans, and canned goods.

Be alert to changes around you. Report rodent die offs to local hospitals or to the Navajo Nation Veterinary and Livestock Program as they could be an indication of several diseases that could affect humans. Salmonella poisoning is a constant threat each spring and summer from foods that we eat at the flea market or restaurants, gatherings such as graduations, and even from fresh foods such as meats and produce.

Rabies Alert:

Rabies continues to be a yearly threat to wildlife and pets. An oral rabies vaccination program will be conducted later this year in Flagstaff for wildlife for a third year in a row to help control the outbreak.

To avoid rabies vaccinate your animals and pets including the cats. Typically, animals acquire rabies by being bitten by a rabid animal or bat.

Rabies is a viral disease of mammals that attacks an infected animal's nervous system and always results in death.

Symptoms in wildlife, such as foxes

and raccoons, include aggressiveness, disorientation, excessive drooling of saliva and showing no fear of humans or lethargy, walking in circles, loss of muscular coordination, convulsions, and irritability.

To avoid rabies you should:

Watch wildlife from a distance. Do not approach or attempt to handle wild animals. Do not feed wild animals.

Keep garbage in secure containers and away from wildlife.

Feed pets indoors and make sure they are current on their rabies vaccination.

Seal openings in attics, basements, porches, sheds, barns and screen chimneys that may provide access to bats and other wildlife.

For more information on livestock care and diseases, call the Navajo Veterinary and Livestock Program in Window Rock at 928.871.6615. For assistance with wildlife issues please call the Navajo Nation Department of Fish and Wildlife at 928.871.6451.



For information on health topics call the NDOH Health Education Program at 928.871.6562 or the Community Health Representative Program at 928.871.6782. Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management can be reached at 928.871.6892.

The Public Health Emergency Preparedness contact number is 928.871.6525.

Practice Safe Food Handling and Food Protection

"Hello everyone – spring has sprung!" said **Herman Shorty** of NDOH/Environmental Health/Code Enforcement.

"It's time to be prepared for outdoor gatherings all across the Navajo Nation and in neighboring communities. As you know, it's time for graduations, ceremonies, increasing numbers of swap meets, picnics and all the fun type of gatherings. It is especially important to check the food. Practice safe food handling and food

protection such as keeping foods at the appropriate temperatures. Food safety practices help to reduce the likelihood of food borne related illness. I wish to thank my staff members: **Sam Canyon** at the Fort Defiance District Office; **Geraldine T. Ashley** at the Gallup District Office and **Lester Lansing** at the Shiprock District Office. Our Central Office Specialist is **Beulah Belone**. Visit any of our district offices to report unsanitary food practices or

to get information on food handlers' training certification (blue card) or to obtain a temporary/itinerant food service permit. Our phone number is 928.871.6349. Earth Day is April 22nd. Let's cleanup our Mother Earth throughout this week and practice food safety at all times."

Meth and Domestic Violence Prevention Training



Top (L-R): Mike Salabiye, Jill Jim, Robert Nakai, Joe Willey, Deborah Black
Bottom (L-R): Patricia Olson, Alberta Curley, Jaime Mike, Nyla Seweingyawma, Raven Murray

The Department of Behavioral Health Services participated in the Methamphetamine Suicide Prevention Initiative and Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative Community Sharing event at the Navajo Nation Museum on February 22, 2011 by giving a presentation on the services and displaying the DBHS Prevention events. The Indian Health Services Headquarter Project Officers were in attendance and were doing site visits by meeting with all the MSPI and DVPI Points of Contact.

The DBHS MSPI and DVPI demonstration projects will focus on prevention and education, trainings for community members, professional development for staff, and establishing the base line data. We are pleased to announce our collaboration with Navajo Area Indian Health Services who has hired an evaluator for technical assistance with the MSPI Project.



The Navajo Health Education Program (NHEP) mission is to create a healthy nation by promoting healthy lifestyles. The goal is to increase a healthy, productive, functional life of all Navajo individuals by delivering culturally relevant health education services. Our program has 8 offices & 5 sub-offices across the Navajo Nation. Each office has 1 Senior Health Educator, 1 Health Education Technician and/or 1 Health Educator & 1 Office Specialist.

Along with NHEP we also have our HIV Prevention Program (HIVPP), with 5 HIV Health Educators at 5 agency offices across the Navajo Nation. The HIVPP mission to promote health & quality of life by preventing & reducing HIV transmission thru Ke', family beliefs & values, education & awareness, & encourage responsibilities & healthy behaviors. Finally, we have our Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program (TPPP) is located in Tuba City, with 1 Health Education Technician. The target population for this program consist of: Male & Female youth, ages 12 – 18 Parents/caregivers of youth/adolescents Youth 4th – 6th grade for optional puberty awareness classes.

Although our target population is all the same; patient, school health, community health, & work site education, each program covers different areas of education. If you are interested in a session please contact our office at 928.289.8045 or lishua.gishie@wihcc.org.

NAVAJO DIVISION OF HEALTH

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Program & Departments

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- b. Legislative Analyst, Theresa Galvan 928.871.6350
- c. Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation (OPRE), Roselyn Begay, 928.871.6350
- d. Management Information Systems, Theresa Galvan, 928.871.6350
- e. Executive Office, Barbara Ahasteen, Senior. Office Specialist, 928.871.6350

Navajo Epidemiology Center (NEC), Deborah Klaus, Ph.D. 928.871.6254

Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program (PHEP), David Nez, 928.871.6525

Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention (BCCP), Curtis Briscoe, 928.871.6245

Community Health Representative Program (CHR), Mae-Gilene Begay, 928.871.6782

Department of Behavioral Health Services (DBHS), Ray Daw, 928.871.6235

Food Distribution Program (FDP), Claudeen Tallwood, 928.871.6429

Health Education Program (HEP), Philene Herrera, 928.871.6562

Kayenta Public Health Nursing (KPHN), Linda Cothron, 928.697.4050

Navajo Area Agency on Aging (NAAA), Hank Haskie, 928.871.6868

Navajo Special Diabetes Project (NSDP), Pete Hoskie, 928.871.6532

New Dawn Program (NDP), Harry Tom, 928.729.4279

Office of Environmental Health (OEH), Herman Shorty, 928.871.6349

Office of Navajo Uranium Workers (ONUW), Larry Martinez, 505.368.1260

Women, Infants & Children Program (WIC), Adele, King, 928.871.6698